# **Kentucky Teacher**

### ON THE WEB

### News for the Nation's Most Innovative Educators

### Kentucky Department of Education

#### **OCTOBER 2001**

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Page 1: Midpoint CATS results show progress in schools

# **Moving Toward Proficiency**

# Midpoint CATS results show progress in schools

By Faun S. Fishback Kentucky Department of Education

The recent release of midpoint scores from the 2000-02 testing and accountability cycle of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS) has many Kentucky teachers and administrators taking a closer look at their strategies for getting students to proficiency and beyond by 2014.

Index scores from the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT), designed by Kentucky teachers to measure students' content knowledge, and the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills, a national norm-referenced test, were released to schools in September and to the public on Oct. 2. On average, Kentucky schools are continuing to move students toward proficiency.

Scores from both CATS components, administered during the spring of 2001, generally show progress when compared to previous-year data. While all trend data is short-term, schools seem to be making progress in each subject area at the grades tested.

"What we're seeing from these numbers is an upward trend," said Kentucky Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit. "The gains are small, in most cases, but they are in the right direction."

At the elementary level, the good news is in reading. Fourth-graders taking the KCCT scored 80.7 in reading, well on the way to the goal of 100 (proficient on a 140-point scale). Their second-highest performance was in science at 77.

Seventh-graders also scored highest in reading. They scored 80.5 on their way to the goal of 100. The next-highest scores for middle grades were posted by 8th-graders in practical living/vocational studies at 67.8 and in social studies at 67.3.

At the high school level, results in the four core subjects - reading, mathematics, science and social studies - showed index scores ranging from 60.6 to 68.8. The highest scores for 10th-graders were in practical living/vocational studies (73.6) and reading (68.8).

Scores in writing (assessed at the 4th, 7th and 12th grades) were among the lowest in many schools and districts. Scores were also generally low in arts and humanities at the elementary and high school levels.

Wilhoit expressed concerns about differences in student performance from region to region. "Although there is progress overall, some regions trail behind the rest," he said. "We'll be looking at this data and working with schools to ensure that they are able to get to proficiency by 2014."

Regions 3 and 8 posted the lowest indices at the elementary and middle school levels. Regions 6 and 8 have the lowest indices at the high school level.

Regions 2 and 5 have the highest indices at the elementary level. Regions 2 and 4 have the highest middle school indices. Regions 4 and 5 have the highest high school indices.

During October, teams of teachers and administrators from schools in all eight regions are participating in "Spotlight on Proficiency" training. These sessions are designed to help the teams train their fellow teachers and administrators on the student performance standards and the standards-setting process. Participants will become familiar with the new performance-level descriptions and learn the process of finding patterns in student performance and base future instruction and classroom experiences on the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools" and "Kentucky Core Content for Assessment."

Training sessions will be held at the school level beginning in November. Each school has received a CD-ROM of training materials, which can be loaded on the school's proxy server for access by all staff.

The materials are also available on the Department of Education Web site at <a href="https://www.kentuckyschools.org/standards">www.kentuckyschools.org/standards</a>. The Online KDE Bookstore offers a 30-minute tape of three videos for use during the training. The tape can be purchased for \$15 online at <a href="https://www.kentuckyschools.org/bookstore/">www.kentuckyschools.org/bookstore/</a> or by calling Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421.

\*\*For more information about the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System and the Kentucky Core Content Tests, contact Cheryl Ungerleider at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:cungerle@kde.state.ky.us.">cungerle@kde.state.ky.us.</a>

Page 2: Commissioner's Comments - Many schools are well on their way to proficiency

## Can all schools reach proficiency by 2014?

# Many are already well on their way!

By Gene Wilhoit Commissioner of Education

When I visited Grant's Lick Elementary in Campbell County, the students in Reeda Stamper Hart's classroom wasted no time putting me on the spot.

Hart, who is Kentucky's Elementary School Teacher of the Year, had organized her class to interview me, record my answers, then discuss what I said and write a story. A confident primary student named Hannah immediately asked me, "What's your favorite school?" I found myself staring at the "Mr. Microphone" she was holding in my face. She probably thought I was dodging the question, but I was telling her the truth. I told her that Kentucky has almost 1,300 schools, that I'm responsible for all of them, that they are all wonderful places to be - and that I'm lucky because I get to travel all over the state visiting them.

On this day, Grant's Lick was my favorite school. Here was a teacher - a team-builder among her peers, proud of her whole school - who engaged every student in the learning process.

My visit to Middle School Teacher of the Year Anthony Creed Turner's science class at Harlan Middle School was wonderful, too. His students and I built and launched paper rockets, learning about gravity, trajectory and wind resistance in the process. Turner is a relatively new teacher, enthusiastic and amazed at what he is learning every day.

At Atherton High School, I watched Kentucky Teacher of the Year Stephen H. T. Lin with his choral group. He was inside those students' heads, drawing out not just the right notes, the right tempo, but also the emotional expression called for in each piece. When choir members varied in pronouncing a word in "Shchedrik," a Ukrainian carol published by Russica Musica, Lin turned to a Ukrainian student in the choir for authoritative help.

I wish everybody who cares about children could visit these three inspiring classrooms and know, as I do, that we have many, many teachers in this state who just as effectively reach out to each student, who are just as willing to do things differently if that's what it takes to engage a child in the learning process.

Lately I've been thinking about these three teachers and their students in the context of the Kentucky Core Content Test results for 2001 and our goal of getting all schools to proficiency or beyond by 2014. We have applied the new performance standards to the past three years of tests. What we see, statewide, is steady

improvement in every content area and at every grade level. Next year we will combine these results with those from the 2002 tests to form the first point after the baseline on each school's customized growth chart. Each school will know immediately whether it is on track to reach the goal of 100 or better by 2014.

Right now, we have 25 schools at the extremes of the scale: 21 scoring below 50 and four already scoring 100 or better. The rest are at all points between (see chart on Page 10). We have heard a couple of educators cite past improvement rates and question whether all schools can reach the goal of proficiency in just 13 more years.

But four schools have already reached the goal, and hundreds more are on track. We know we can accelerate improvement. Two schools in Clay County, for example, made jumps of more than 20 points on the strength of a new superintendent who came in and did things differently.

Powerful new tools - the scholastic audit process and the new student performance standards - are available to help every school improve.

The scholastic audit looks at virtually everything that has an impact on teaching and learning in a school. It gives the school specific recommendations tailored to its needs. Early data from the first round of audits (required for the lowest-performing schools) and reviews (voluntary for other schools) suggest 17 factors that seem to be present in every successful school - and absent in every struggling school. These are powerful leverage points that are being shared throughout the state.

The new student performance standards came from the most comprehensive standards-setting process ever undertaken by any state-level education testing system. More than 1,600 Kentucky teachers, using actual student work, developed specific definitions for our four performance levels - novice, apprentice, proficient and distinguished - in every content area and grade level. All teachers now will have a much clearer understanding of what proficiency means and what it takes to get students to that level and beyond.

We have teachers throughout Kentucky like Reeda Hart, Creed Turner and Stephen Lin -- teachers who reflect on their responsibilities to students; who pay attention to each student and intervene quickly when special attention is needed; who get real joy in seeing their students succeed. These teachers clearly draw their self-worth from the contributions they make to their schools and their children. In their classrooms I did not hear one complaint about the children, their parents or the difficulty of the work.

All I heard was dedicated instruction and guidance and the sounds of all students actively and eagerly engaged in learning. And that is a key to getting to proficiency.

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To respond to the commissioner on this topic, send e-mail to <a href="mailto:gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us">gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us</a> or phone (502) 564-3141.

To learn more about scholastic audits and the 17 leverage points for school success, see Page 3 of the August 2001 issue of Kentucky Teacher or visit www.kentuckyschools.org/olsi/improve/schaudit/schaudit.asp on the Internet.

Information about Kentucky's student performance standards is available at <a href="www.kentuckyschools.org/standards/">www.kentuckyschools.org/standards/</a> or from Cheryl Ungerleider, (502) 564-3421 or <a href="cungerle@kde.state.ky.us">cungerle@kde.state.ky.us</a>

### **Kentucky Core Content Test Results, 2001**

#### **Number of Schools by Score Levels**

Schools: 1 20 185 455 367 126 26 4

Score Levels: 30s 40s 50s 60s 70s 80s 90s 100+

**Note:** The total of 1,184 public schools represented in this chart is less than the total number of public schools in the state (1,283) because not all schools include grades in which students take Kentucky Core Content Tests.

Page 3: Teachers tell Wilhoit what they think about four critical issues in education

# Teachers tell Wilhoit what they think about four critical issues in education

By Joy Barr Kentucky Department of Education

Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit met with 32 of Kentucky's award-winning teachers in late September to discuss critical issues in education. The teachers met Sept. 28 and 29 in Danville for the 2001 Kentucky Teacher Forum.

The forum, hosted by Wilhoit and Kentucky Teacher of the Year 2000 Mardi Montgomery of Boyle County High School, focused on identifying strategies to address four critical issues in education:

- high student performance;
- teacher quality, recruitment and retention;
- school, classroom and professional environment;
- teacher empowerment.

"This forum is another tool I want to use to gather ideas and concerns as we continue to improve our education system," said Wilhoit. "In this case, we had the opportunity to pick the brains of some of our most highly rewarded classroom teachers."

The participants included a cross-section of past and present teachers of the year, Milken Family Foundation Award winners, Christa McAuliffe fellows, Ashland Inc. Teacher Achievement Award winners, and Presidential Math and Science Award winners.

Each teacher had the opportunity to discuss personal views about the best ways to achieve goals in each of the four main areas of discussion. "It was enlightening to hear what these professional educators had to say," said Wilhoit. "I suspect their views are not very different from the views of most other teachers throughout the state. We'll be using their comments as we develop strategies and policies to address these important issues."

Wilhoit said he intends to add the Kentucky Teacher Forum to the list of advisory groups that provide feedback and direction in the quest to get every school to proficiency and beyond. He already meets regularly with six other groups representing a cross-section of the education community and public education stakeholders.

The Kentucky forum is a spin-off of the National Teacher Forum that occurs annually in Washington, D.C. The state forum is planned each year by the previous year's teacher of the year and is supported by the Kentucky Department of Education and the Kentucky Teacher of the Year program. The teacher-host of the next Kentucky Teacher Forum will be Kentucky Teacher of the Year 2001 Jo Biehle of Worthington Elementary in the Raceland Independent district.

This year's teacher-host, Mardi Montgomery, says the annual forum has been one of her goals. "Seeing the forum become a reality was extremely important to me as a teacher," she said. "My vision is for districts around the state to consider the Kentucky Teacher Forum a way for teachers to communicate and to feel connected."

One of Montgomery's goals was to have students involved in the forum. At the opening of each session of this year's event, a student shared a transactive writing piece describing his or her own definition of a "really great teacher."

\*\*To respond to the commissioner on this topic, phone (502) 564-3141 or send an e-mail message to <a href="mailto:gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us">gwilhoit@kde.state.ky.us</a>. For more about his advisory council system, see the September 2001 issue of Kentucky Teacher.

Page 4: National testing experts say test scores validate CATS

## National testing experts say test scores validate CATS

By Faun S. Fishback Kentucky Department of Education

School scores from the Kentucky Core Content Tests (KCCT) administered last spring show improvement in all content areas, all regions and at all grade levels, Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit told members of the Kentucky Board of Education at their Oct. 3-5 meeting. Wilhoit noted that the percentage of students at the proficient level on the KCCT is growing while the number of students at the novice level is shrinking.

The tests measure student knowledge of the Kentucky Core Content for Assessment most directly. The CTBS, a national, basic skills test with multiple-choice questions, is the second testing component of the Commonwealth Accountability Testing System (CATS).

John Poggio and James Catterall, members of the National Technical Advisory Panel for Assessment and Accountability (NTAPAA) that advises the state board on testing matters, joined the commissioner in congratulating Kentucky schools on their performance on the 2000-01 tests.

"The scores are impressive and positive," said Poggio, vice chair of NTAPAA. "There is meaningful change here. There is clear evidence of ongoing progression in schools to move children from novice to higher levels. That pattern is consistent in all of the data without reversals at all."

Catterall, who chairs the national technical panel, told the board, "The state's schools appear to be on a broad-based path to improvement. What you see should support confidence in the testing system itself. That alone should be motivating schools to keep up their momentum."

He told members that while they should be concerned about the continuing gaps in achievement between groups of students, other states also are experiencing the same problem. "Figuring out ways to reduce achievement gaps is part of the national education agenda," he said.

Commissioner Wilhoit pointed to the successes of several high-poverty schools to show how Kentucky educators are finding ways to overcome some barriers to learning. "We have many high-poverty schools among our top performers," he said.

However, achievement gaps continue by gender, race and disability. Male students are posting lower scores in arts and humanities, and students with disabilities are performing lower consistently across content areas. While African-American students posted greater growth in their scores than white students since the 1999-2000 tests, gaps remain, especially in reading at the elementary level and in high school science.

Scholastic audits, which were administered in low-performing schools following the 1999-2000 tests, seem to be having an impact on improved performance, Wilhoit said. Forty-four of the 46 schools that received a scholastic audit posted improved scores on the 2000-2001 tests. Audited schools averaged a seven-point gain in their index scores, he added.

As of 2001, one school posted an index in the 30s; 20 schools scored in the 40s. At the other end, 26 schools scored 90 or more, and four schools are at or above 100, the state's goal by the year 2014. (See box on Page 10.) The board decided to contact the local boards and school councils in schools with indices below 50 to encourage their leadership in effecting positive change in those schools.

The board agenda also included discussions on these items:

- Work being done by the Collaborative Center for Literacy Development to evaluate research-based reading models being used in Kentucky schools;
- Teacher recruitment and retention recommendations that the Department of Education presented to the state legislature's Interim Joint Committee on Education in October;
- Implementation of the Kentucky Occupational Skills Standards Assessment and Certification System to increase the number of students earning skill standards certificates by 10 percent each biennium through 2014.

The state board also gave its support to the Kentucky High School Athletic Association's decision to bar schools from participating in athletics if they violate the federal Title IX law. Title IX requires gender equity in athletics, from scheduling to training facilities and playing fields. Currently, schools not complying with the law can be fined or put on probation.

Page 5: Kentucky's Class of 2014 - A Strong Start in Writing

## Kentucky's Class of 2014

## A Strong Start in Writing

When entry-level primary student Kara Boyd said "I like to go to the circus," Athens Elementary teacher Rita Day put the words in writing. Kara is learning that writing expresses ideas and can be relevant to her own life.

Through such activities, Kara and her classmates - each one a potential member of Kentucky's high school graduating class of 2014 - are building a foundation for writing. Here is how their learning relates to some of the expectations related to writing, as outlined in Expectation 1.11 in the "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools":

Primary: Students will produce, through drawing, symbols and letters, writing that has meaning to the student; produce writing which has meaning that remains constant; uses principles of directionality (left to right, top to bottom, front to back) for placement of text and pictures.

Grade 4: Students will write personal pieces to communicate ideas and write pieces based on personal experiences; identify and apply characteristics of effective writing in producing and discussing their own work, including awareness of audience and purpose, organization, idea development, and standards of correctness (mechanics, grammar, spelling).

Grade 7: Students will write to communicate ideas and write pieces based on inquiry and/or personal experience that show independent thinking and incorporate ideas and information from reading, listening, observing and inquiry.

Grade 12: Students will write personal pieces (narratives, memoirs, personal essays) to communicate ideas and pieces that demonstrate independent thinking about content and structure observed in informational and literary reading.

A strong foundation in writing also supports many of the expectations in reading, leading to success in all content areas. For more about what this year's entry-level primary students are learning, refer to "Program of Studies for Kentucky Schools." The document is available free of charge online (go to <a href="https://www.kentuckyschools.org">www.kentuckyschools.org</a> and select "Program of Studies). It is also available for purchase from the KDE Bookstore. Select "Bookstore" on the department's Web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where the web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where web site or contact Windy Newton at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where web site or <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org</a> where <a href="mailto:www.web.augusto.org">www.web.augusto.org<

Page 6: New to the 'Net Lesson 2.2 - How can my students learn by using e-mail?

#### New to the 'Net Lesson 2.2

## How can my students learn by using e-mail?

Welcome back to "New to the 'Net," a professional development series for teachers who want to use technology effectively for teaching and learning. In this lesson . . .

- learn about using e-mail as an instructional tool;
- find resources for helping students explore the world from the classroom.

To locate this lesson online, select the "New to the 'Net" main page if you bookmarked it last year, or go to the Kentucky Department of Education's home page (<a href="www.kentuckyschools.org">www.kentuckyschools.org</a>) and click on the mascot "Newt," then click on the Lesson 2.2 link. There you'll find links to all of the sites recommended in this lesson.

#### Lesson 2.2

Newt the "New to the 'Net" mascot is ready to explore the world. How can Newt begin his journey without ever leaving his home or his classroom? Without money or a passport or even a suitcase? Newt - and your students - can travel the world via the World Wide Web and by using e-mail!

E-mail can connect students with others in classes around the world. E-mail can also link them with mentors in the business world and with authors and researchers who will answer their questions.

Students can travel the globe via e-mail, but effective e-mail involves more than dashing off a message and waiting for a response. Just as students learn acceptable ways to communicate by writing and speaking, they need to learn how to use e-mail communication in acceptable and effective ways. The Web has several sites on e-mail basics:

- Mary Houten-Kemp's "Everything E-Mail" everythingemail.net/email help tips.html
- "Netiquette" by Virginia Shea www.albion.com/netiquette/book/index.html
- "Harness E-Mail: How It Works" www.learnthenet.com/english/html/20how.htm

For teachers, the department posts a site about why and how to use e-mail as a teaching tool. Find it at www.kentuckyschools.org/oet/customer/stlp/whyemail.asp.

#### Let's go exploring!

How can students learn about a country, even before they begin sending and receiving e-mail from someone there? What language do the country's citizens speak? How big are the cities and towns? What is the climate like? Students are likely to have dozens of questions about the culture and people in the home countries of their e-mail pals.

These are "teachable moments," and there are online resources ready to help students explore the world. One of the best, according to folks with the Department of Education's Division of School Instructional Technology, is "MarcoPolo." The site (<a href="http://MarcoPolo.worldcom.com">http://MarcoPolo.worldcom.com</a>) is a Web portal for Internet-based content for the classroom. It links directly to the best online resources for education, including EdSiteMent, EconEdLink, ArtsEdge, Illuminations, ScienceNetLinks, and National Geographic's Xpeditions (which includes a searchable online atlas of the world).

Once you have visited the e-mail basics, MarcoPolo and National Geographic sites, how do you connect your students with students, educators and mentors in other states and nations? Visit "e-Pals Classroom Exchange" at www.epals.com. This site helps classrooms meet, correspond and interact with other classrooms through the Internet. Users can search, browse and contact classrooms listed in the online database. This opportunity is great for cultural, language, history, science or geography projects.

\*\*Editor's Note: "New to the 'Net" started in the August 2000 issue of Kentucky Teacher and continued through lesson 9 in May 2001. If you have questions about the series or need copies of lessons, go to <a href="https://www.kentuckyschools.org">www.kentuckyschools.org</a> and click on Newt, the course mascot, or send a request to Kentucky Teacher, 1914 Capital Plaza Tower, 500 Mero St., Frankfort, KY 40601; <a href="https://kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us">kyteacher@kde.state.ky.us</a>.

Susan Lancaster of the Department of Education's Division of School Instructional Technology is the mentor for this year's "New to the 'Net" series. E-mail your questions, comments and ideas to her at <a href="mailto:slancast@kde.state.ky.us">slancast@kde.state.ky.us</a> (or through the KETS global list), or phone her at (502) 564-7168, extension 4542.

Watch future issues of Kentucky Teacher for examples of how e-mail has become a teaching and learning tool in Kentucky classrooms.

Page 7: Abundant resources available to help schools deal with children in crisis

# Abundant resources available to help schools deal with children in crisis

By Joy Barr Kentucky Department of Education

There are times in the classroom when unforeseen situations arise, causing feelings of anxiety and even fear. Traumatic situations, whether international in scope - such as the tragedies in New York, Washington, D.C., and Pennsylvania on Sept. 11 - or affecting only the local community, may cause a child a great deal of pain. Students are also affected by personal losses such as the death of a family member or a pet.

How can Kentucky teachers help create a feeling of security among their students?

"Teachers know, of course, that outside influences affect the classroom performance of students," said Angela Wilkins, director of the Kentucky Department of Education's Division of Student, Family and Community Support Services. "Students need to feel safe in schools. Teachers and administrators are influential people in a child's life. When a traumatic situation arises, these adults can provide much reassurance and support."

In a recent e-mail message, Education Commissioner Gene Wilhoit reminded superintendents and principals of each educator's responsibility to students during crisis times. "The professionals in our public schools are providing the strength and stability our children, families and communities need to endure crisis. We are living and working in the face of frightening uncertainties, and our valuable, vulnerable young people are looking to us."

Steve Kimberling, a branch manager in the Division of Student, Family and Community Support Services, says that teachers are often a primary source of accurate information for their students. "It is important to keep students informed in a constructive way when tragedies occur, being certain to consider age appropriateness," he said. "It is important to understand and respect the magnitude of the event but equally important to create a sense of normalcy. Academic instruction needs to continue."

One way to continue instruction in times of local or national crisis, Kimberling said, is to make the crisis the topic of content studies. For example, ask students to talk about similarities and differences between Pearl Harbor and the Trade Center attacks in social studies classes. For younger students, invite fire fighters, emergency medical technicians or police officers to talk about what they do on the job during times of crisis and at ordinary times.

Wilkins and Kimberling recommend that each school have a safety and crisis response plan in place to guide faculty, staff and students through emergencies and recovery. "It's important not only to have this crisis response plan on file but to continually practice the plan, just as we practice fire and tornado drills," Wilkins said.

The Kentucky Center for School Safety is one state-level resource for assistance. The center works with education and other agencies statewide to provide support services to schools.

There are many online resources for helping children understand and cope with tragic events. The Department of Education has posted links to many of those sites at <a href="www.kentuckyschools.org/crisis">www.kentuckyschools.org/crisis</a>. The Web site for the U.S. Department of Education (<a href="www.ed.gov">www.ed.gov</a>) has links to other sites that teachers and school administrators can use to gather strategies for helping children deal with crisis.

The Kentucky Community Crisis Response Board has resources available at <a href="https://www.state.ky.us/agencies/military/kccrb">www.state.ky.us/agencies/military/kccrb</a> or (502) 564-0131.

For more information, contact the Division of Student, Family and Community Support Services in the Department of Education at (502) 564- 3678, or send e-mail to Steve Kimberling through the KETS global list or to <a href="mailto:skimberl@kde.state.ky.us">skimberl@kde.state.ky.us</a>.

# **Tips for Stressful Times**

- Be open and honest with students.
- Craft age-appropriate responses.
- Deal with facts, not rumors or opinions.
- Know and routinely practice the school's safety and response plans.

Pages 8 and 9: Language barriers broken here!

- Educators are finding ways to guide students with limited English proficiency to academic proficiency
- Teachers use familiar strategies to meet the needs of LEP students
- Resources for Information and ESL Professional Development

## Language barriers broken here!

Almost 6,000 students in Kentucky public schools communicate in 82 different languages but have limited proficiency in English. Educators are finding ways to guide these students to academic proficiency.

By Faun S. Fishback Kentucky Department of Education

Last school year, 84 Kentucky public school districts reported enrolling more than 5,900 students with limited English proficiency (LEP). These students speak approximately 82 different languages.

The largest concentrations of LEP students are in the Jefferson County, Fayette County, Bowling Green Independent, Boone County and Kenton County school districts. However, small and rural districts such as Mayfield Independent, Shelby County, Berea Independent and Christian County also are experiencing increasing numbers of students for whom English is a second language.

Federal law and the Office of Civil Rights require schools throughout the nation to assess LEP students' English language proficiency in reading, writing, speaking and listening and to design instructional services to meet the needs of these students. Kentucky's program of studies includes a section on the requirements for such services.

The Kentucky Department of Education convened a broad-based stakeholders' group to develop a comprehensive framework for serving LEP students. Working with the department's English as a Second Language (ESL) Cross-Agency Team, the stakeholders are looking at areas such as professional development (for example, infusing ESL practices into conferences, academies and other teacher network activities), research-based instructional and assessment practices, recruitment and retention of ESL

teachers, parent involvement, and expanding ESL resources in the department's eight regional service centers.

In the meantime, Kentucky schools must continue to guide all students to proficiency, including students for whom English is the second language. Districts with large LEP student populations are hiring teachers with an ESL endorsement or certification to work with LEP students. Those teachers may work collaboratively with the general education teachers in academic content areas; pull LEP students out of the general classroom and use physical activities, visual aids and the environment to teach English vocabulary along with concepts in mathematics, science, social studies and other content areas; support English instruction in content areas, bilingual instruction or English as a Second Language classes; and coordinate instruction with Extended School Services.

In districts with fewer than 10 LEP students, regular classroom teachers often provide content as well as English instruction. While that tactic may seem daunting, teaching a second language through content is one of the most effective ESL strategies, according to the "ESL Handbook" for Bowling Green Independent Schools.

The handbook advises content-area teachers that "LEP students learn best through more than one word, more than one reading or more than one avenue for understanding a concept. ESL instruction promotes the use of multiple modes of literacy (reading, writing, speaking and listening)."

# Teachers use familiar strategies to meet the needs of LEP students

Here are some strategies regular classroom teachers are using to help LEP students acquire language skills and literacy.

Thematic and interdisciplinary learning - Organize instruction around key ideas and relevant themes linking content areas (for example, language arts, social studies, arts and humanities). Use guiding questions and essential questions that anchor learning for the students. Teach vocabulary and concepts in context, integrating listening, speaking, writing and reading. Incorporate and celebrate the diversity of the students' lives.

Technology - Integrate technology regularly in lessons.

Collaborative or cooperative learning - Have students work in groups or pairs in problem-solving situations so LEP students learn to use academic and social language to negotiate meaning of the language, reach consensus and develop a context for learning language.

Demonstrations - Give instructions on how to complete a task using props, pictures, pantomime and other visual aids to facilitate comprehension.

Dialogue journal - Establish an interactive record of conversations between a student and the teacher through journal writing. These journals are not corrected because the focus is on the message rather than the form.

Graphic organizers - Use timelines, flow charts, outlines and semantic maps to help learners understand vocabulary, concepts and their relationships.

Authentic assessment - Use multiple measures of continuous assessments such as oral interviews, story or text retelling, projects and exhibitions, experiments and demonstrations, literature response logs or

journals, anecdotal records, running records for reading, open-ended response items, observations and writing pieces. Provide hands-on activities to give students the opportunity to acquire language naturally while "doing."

Language experience approach - Use students' shared experiences to teach reading. As students talk about personal experiences or a familiar topic, write what the students say on an overhead or flip chart. Use the writing to develop reading and writing strategies around familiar vocabulary, language and contexts. Have students illustrate the story they have helped create. This approach supports students who are not literate in their own language.

Peer tutoring - Allow a student with a higher level of language proficiency to work with a student with a lower level of proficiency.

Role play and simulation - Have a group of students develop an unscripted conversation around a new situation.

Effective reading and writing strategies - Use strategies such as shared reading, guided reading, reciprocal teaching, choice in reading materials, patterns of text structure, anticipation guides, reader/writer's workshop, process writing, and reading and writing across the curriculum.

Storytelling - Tell stories that are familiar or highly predictable, repetitive and that lend themselves to dramatization with the heavy use of visuals and realia (which the Bowling Green handbook defines as using actual items rather than pictures to describe objects).

# **Resources for More Information and ESL Professional Development**

- Nancy LaCount, Kentucky Department of Education, at (502) 564-2106 or <u>nlacount@kde.state.ky.us.</u>
- Department of Education regional service centers. A list of regional ESL contacts appears in the May issue of Kentucky Teacher. (Note this correction: The Region 3 ESL consultant is Berta Calvert, (502) 485-3623 or <a href="mailto:bcalver1@jefferson.k12.ky.us">bcalver1@jefferson.k12.ky.us</a>.)
- Online professional development in ESL &endash;
   campus.murraystate.edu/org/second.language/ESLTheory.htm
- ESL Conference 2001

The deadline is Nov. 2 for registering for "English as a Second Language Conference 2001: Building Literacy in a Multicultural Kentucky," set for Dec. 7 and 8 at the Holiday Inn Hurstbourne in Louisville. The registration fee is \$50.

The conference offers in-depth professional development for teachers, administrators and higher education instructors. Participants may choose from these strands: preschool/primary, grades 4-8, secondary, staff experienced with LEP students, adult educators, higher education. The agenda for the evening of Dec. 7 includes an international festival of ideas, music and food.

For more information, contact conference co-chair Annie Rooney French at (502) 564-7056 or Linda Morse at (502) 564-3791 or <a href="mailto:lmcse@kde.state.ky.us">lmcse@kde.state.ky.us</a>, or send e-mail to <a href="mailto:lmcse@kde.state.ky.us">lmcse@kde.state.ky.us</a>.

#### Page 10:

- Kentucky to host world's top pre-college science fair
- Kentucky Book Fair set for Nov. 17

## Kentucky to host world's top pre-college science fair

More than 1,200 of the world's most promising young scientists will be at the Kentucky International Convention Center in Louisville May 12-18, 2002, to exhibit cutting-edge research discoveries at the Intel/International Science and Engineering Fair.

The event is the world's only international all-sciences fair for students in grades 9 through 12. Students from all 50 states and 40 countries will compete for 900 awards, including scholarships, cash, computers, lab equipment, summer internships and scientific field trips.

In addition, all Kentucky colleges and universities and the Kentucky Community and Technical Colleges System will offer scholarships to top exhibitors identified by special teams of judges.

Kentucky students will have numerous learning opportunities associated with the fair. Getting involved early are students at Eastern High, a computer science magnet school in Jefferson County. They have already created the fair's official Web site.

The non-profit Science Service Inc. has coordinated the fair for the past 53 years. Intel Corporation has been a sponsor for the past six years. A volunteer committee representing each host community raises private contributions to provide exhibit space and plan special events.

The Commonwealth of Kentucky, which also hosted the event in 1997, is the first state government to serve as a presenting sponsor.

Gov. Paul Patton announced the 2002 event on Oct. 9. "We are proud and excited to be hosting this prestigious international event and these innovative young science pioneers," he told a crowd of reporters, educators, scientists and students. "This is the world's largest pre-college science fair, and the work represents real scientific inquiry that advances human knowledge in meaningful ways. We're eager to showcase their work for thousands of Kentucky students.

Patton noted that the science fair could bring as much as \$15 million into the state's economy but that "the real benefit will come in the future, from the learning that takes place here and from the relationships we develop."

He added that the state hopes to take maximum advantage of recruiting opportunities while the world's top science students are here for the fair.

Between now and the fair's opening, Kentuckians will recruit hundreds of judges and volunteers, plan entertainment and educational opportunities related to the fair, and raise funds.

Additional information about the fair, including how to become involved as a judge, volunteer or contributor, is available at <a href="https://www.intelisef2002.org">www.intelisef2002.org</a>.

# Kentucky Book Fair set for Nov. 17

Teachers, parents and students are invited to the 20th annual Kentucky Book Fair, set for Nov. 17 at the William Exum Center on the campus of Kentucky State University in Frankfort.

The event will feature more than 150 authors of national, regional and state renown, all ready to sign their works. Included are more than 20 writers of books for children and teens. Their books will be for sale at a 20 percent discount, with profits going to Kentucky's school, public, private, university and special libraries.

This year's fair welcomes Homer Hickam, author of Rocket Boys, which was the basis for the film October Sky. Hickam, a longtime aerospace engineer at NASA, recently published Sky of Stone: A Memoir, which continues the saga begun with Rocket Boys.

Marcia Jones, author of Luke in a Really Big Pickle, also will appear at the fair. The saga of 9-year-old Luke and his dog, Pickles, is serialized each week in newspapers throughout the state as part of the Newspapers in Education project.

Admission to the Kentucky Book Fair is free. For more information, including a list of authors scheduled to appear at this year's fair, visit <a href="www.kybookfair.com">www.kybookfair.com</a> or call Cecilia Broadwater at (502) 564-8300, ext. 297.

Page 11: Some Nelson County teachers danced their summer away

## Some Nelson County teachers danced their summer away

By Faun S. Fishback Kentucky Department of Education

Dancing barefoot in a school gym is not the way Donnie Reid usually spends a hot summer afternoon. However, this Foster Heights Elementary physical education teacher spent several very warm July afternoons moving to the beat of drums, fiddles, castanets and dulcimers at Nelson County High School. He was a participant in a professional development workshop for the district's teachers.

The district's artist-in-residence, Nancy Barker, held the workshop in conjunction with Kentucky Music Week. In her private life, Barker is an organizer of the music event, which draws people - including many educators - from throughout the nation to Bardstown each summer. The week is packed with music, singing, dancing, arts and crafts, games and storytelling.

As she planned the event for summer 2001, Barker decided to offer a special track for about 20 Nelson County teachers, especially physical education instructors, so they could learn more about dance as an art form. She constructed the professional development workshop around music, games and dances that were already part of the music week. The variety included English contra dances, Appalachian square dances, clogging and play-party games like "The Mexican Hat Dance" and "Skip to My Lou."

Barker is quick to point out that other districts can do this type of professional development without a "ready-made" centerpiece like the music week. With additional support from Nelson County Schools, she was also able to expand the existing program, bringing in performers from Kentucky-based Latin and African dance troupes to provide a wide range of dance experiences for the teachers. John S. Benjamin, director of arts education programs for the Kentucky Arts Council, provided artist resource information for the project as well.

Many Kentucky artists know and understand Kentucky's core content, Barker added. They can provide materials and activities to help teachers gain confidence to teach different art forms in their content areas.

Each of the week's sessions offered teaching materials about a specific dance and the culture from which it came that are pertinent to Kentucky's core content.

"PE is a learning time," said Reid, the physical education teacher. "Students can learn as much in PE as in any other class, and they should expect to. In PE we can learn and have fun at the same time!"

Finding innovative ways to make learning fun is a watchword for Barker. Since being named artist-inresidence for Nelson County six years ago, she has focused on helping teachers get more comfortable teaching the arts and excited about adding arts activities to their lessons. She also works in classrooms alongside teachers and directly with students on projects like piano keyboarding, script writing and dulcimer playing.

Barker's goal for last summer's dance workshop was to help teachers feel more at ease with dance movements, build their dance skills and give them resources to use in their classes. Reid said she accomplished that goal. "This week has given me more ideas on how to use dance in my classes," he said. "I feel much more comfortable doing the dances. It's been a really good source of ideas for collaborating with other teachers."

Barker is one of only a handful of artists-in-residence employed by Kentucky school districts. She works with teachers in all content areas and at all grade levels to help infuse arts across the curriculum. "I'm a cheerleader for the arts," Barker said. "I approach the job as an artist and a teacher. I'm always looking for innovative ways to make learning fun."

#### Want details?

To find out more about Nelson County's arts programs, contact Barker at (502) 349-7000 or by e-mail at <a href="mailto:nbarker@nelson.k12.ky.us">nbarker@nelson.k12.ky.us</a>. Her e-mail address is also accessible through the KETS global list.

For more about Kentucky's Artist-in-Residence Program, contact John S. Benjamin at (502) 564-3757 or toll-free at (888) 833-2787, extension 4813; send e-mail to <a href="mailto:John.Benjamin@mail.state.ky.us">John.Benjamin@mail.state.ky.us</a> (or through the KETS global list); or visit <a href="www.kyarts.org">www.kyarts.org</a> on the Internet (click on "Arts Education").

#### Want an artist in your school or district?

Nancy Barker is a full-time district artist-in-residence, but other artists are available to work in your district or school on a temporary basis through the Kentucky Arts Council's Artist-in-Residence Program.

In-school residencies provide opportunities for students to learn about and experience the making of art in a wide variety of disciplines. Residencies may last four, 12 or 16 weeks.

The deadline for completed "Intent to Apply" forms for the next round of Artist-in-Residence Program grants is Dec. 21. The deadline for applications is Jan. 21, 2002. For details and forms, visit <a href="https://www.kyarts.org">www.kyarts.org</a> on the Web. If your school or district misses the "Intent to Apply" deadline, call John S. Benjamin toll-free at (888) 833-2787, extension 4813, to discuss alternatives.

#### Page 12:

- Anderson students become 'SWAT team' in attack against computer network virus
- Guard against viruses!
- STLP rises to the occasion

# Anderson students become 'SWAT team' in attack against computer network virus

By Fran Salyers Kentucky Department of Education

When a new and malicious virus called "nimba" struck computer networks throughout the world on Sept. 18, the Kentucky Education Technology System was among those affected. The virus wormed its way through the system's servers and computers until, in many classrooms and offices, e-mail and the Web access disappeared. This was no small thing, because educators, administrators and students increasingly depend on the system for teaching, learning and record keeping.

Most school districts had a lot of work to do to bring their computers and servers back on line. In some districts (see below), the huge task was more manageable because of an in-house resource: technology-savvy students.

In Anderson County, for example, participants in the Student Technology Leadership Program (STLP) were ready to take action. For the past several years, through course work and hands-on experience, those students had learned what to do with computers and servers - not just how to use them but how to install them, trouble shoot, and do routine and emergency maintenance.

When the virus struck, the STLP students were ready. Under the leadership of Anderson County High School senior Justin Johnson, a group of STLP students brought up the central office computer system without assistance from the district's technical staff. Fifteen STLP students, working with the district's six computer technicians, swept through the schools in SWAT team fashion. They used CD-ROMs to install the necessary disinfectant software on every computer until all 1,100 computers were "clean." Downloading took roughly 20 minutes per machine, so the students totaled 366 hours of downloading to get the system up and running.

Charlotte Wright, the district's technology coordinator, says she can't imagine how long it would have taken her and the technicians to fix every computer without help from the students.

"The students burned the viral disinfectant CDs and went forth to attack the virus," she said. "In the process, they learned networking procedures, trouble shooting and crisis management skills. They did a fantastic job!"

State STLP coordinator Elaine Harrison called Anderson County's reaction to the virus a "textbook example" of what can happen when a district has a strong, long-term STLP program in place. "Over several years, the district had taught students about computer systems and had given the students opportunities and responsibilities for putting their knowledge into action. When this virus hit, students were ready to be a major part of the solution. This is something every district can do - not only to be ready to handle district computer problems but to prepare their students for a technological future."

Justin Johnson, the head student network technician, agrees. "I am truly thankful to our superintendent, Sonny Fentress, and to the Anderson County Board of Education for allowing me to work for them and experience hands-on learning and applications," he said. "They have given me the opportunity of a lifetime"

For more information about the Student Technology Leadership Program, visit <a href="www.kentuckyschools.org/oet/customer/stlp/online">www.kentuckyschools.org/oet/customer/stlp/online</a> or contact state STLP coordinator Elaine Harrison at (502) 564-7130 or <a href="mailto:eharriso@kde.state.ky.us">eharriso@kde.state.ky.us</a>. Contact Anderson County Schools technology coordinator Charlotte Wright at (502) 839-2527 or <a href="mailto:ewright@anderson.k12.ky.us">ewright@anderson.k12.ky.us</a>. Contact the district's STLP sponsor, Margo Paver, at (502) 839-5118 or <a href="mailto:mpaver@anderson.k12.ky.us">mpaver@anderson.k12.ky.us</a>. All three are on the KETS global e-mail list.

## Guard against viruses!

Every person with a networked computer can take steps to minimize a virus's power against workstations and servers. Phil Coleman of the Department of Education's Office of Education Technology offers these virus prevention tips:

- Evaluate your workstation's anti-virus programs and download newer versions if necessary. For help, call on district or school technology coordinators or students in the Student Technology Leadership Program.
- Think twice before opening attachments to e-mails, especially attachments you are not expecting or those about subjects you don't recognize.
- Don't assume that an attachment is virus-free just because you know the person who sent it. That
  person's computer could have been infected with a virus that automatically forwards infected
  attachments to others. When in doubt, phone the sender for confirmation that the attachment was
  intentionally sent.

## STLP rises to the occasion

Student Technology Leadership Program participants rallied to help their districts get technology networks up and running again. By press time, schools in the following districts reported that students had been a significant part of their recovery from the virus.





### Page 13:

- 'Bountiful Plenty' will bring folk art traditions to Speed
- Web site offers free software evaluations

# 'Bountiful Plenty' will bring folk art traditions to Speed

Students and teachers can see and study "A Bountiful Plenty" of American folk art in one place when 85 works travel from Vermont's Shelburne Museum to Kentucky's Speed Art Museum.

Cigar store figures, carousel animals, trade signs, weather vanes, scrimshaw, decoys, quilts, paintings, furniture and other examples from the Shelburne's American folk art collection will be on display at The Speed in Louisville from Feb. 19 to April 14, 2002. Speed staffers report that the Shelburne's collection includes some of the most outstanding American folk art of the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries.

The exhibition will interpret the original context and function of the objects and explore folk art's role in the development of modern American art. To support the educational value of this event, The Speed will host two events for teachers:

- a preview and professional development session from 5 p.m. to 8 p.m. EST on Feb. 21;
- an open-house-style reception from 3 p.m. to 7 p.m. EST on March 7.

Both events will feature free admission to the exhibition. Exhibition-related educational materials will be available.

To register for one or both sessions, call (502) 634-2734. To request group tour information and prices, plus information about assistance available to eligible districts and schools, phone (502) 634-2960 or send e-mail to tours@speedmuseum.org.

For general information on the museum's education programs, check the museum's Web site at <a href="https://www.speedmuseum.org">www.speedmuseum.org</a> or contact Manjiri Menezes at (502) 634-2734 or <a href="mmenezes@speedmuseum.org">mmenezes@speedmuseum.org</a>.

#### **Another Opportunity**

Masterworks from the Albertina (March 19 - May 12, 2002) will feature 102 works of art by Albrecht Dürer, Raphael, Michelangelo, Rubens, Rembrandt, and other Italian, French, Dutch, German and Austrian masters. Works included are from the High Renaissance through Rococo periods. For details, go to <a href="https://www.speedmuseum.org">www.speedmuseum.org</a> and click on "Exhibitions."

## Web site offers free software evaluations

Wondering if an instructional CD-ROM is as good as the vendor says it is? Will a certain software product or book help you achieve your teaching goals?

The answers may be as close as your computer. The Southern Regional Education Board (SREB) offers free access to online evaluations of computer software and instructional materials. The service, called EvaluTech, is a program initiated by the North Carolina Department of Public Instruction, which permits SREB to share it with teachers, administrators, parents and students in its 16 member states, including Kentucky.

EvaluTech's database has more than 7,000 reviews of instructional materials, including computer software, CD-ROMs, videos and books. Users can search using key words, author, title, subject, publisher, grade level (pre-K through 12), format and review date. Categories include arts education, English language arts, character education, computer science, fiction, guidance, healthful living, information skills, mathematics, science, second languages, social studies, traditional literature and vocational education.

Diane Culbertson in the Kentucky Department of Education's Division of School Instructional Technology says the department is a strong supporter of EvaluTech. She recommends that teachers, library media specialists and administrators always check this resource before making software purchases. "They can find lists of high-quality, content-specific software for any grade, subject, teaching method or learning style"

she said. "They can use EvaluTech to decide what software products will best meet their needs before they buy."

Kentucky educators can use education technology funds (state Kentucky Education Technology System funds plus local matching funds) to purchase software. District technology coordinators can provide more information

According to SREB leaders, EvaluTech is the only program of its kind in the country and has been a resource for thousands of educators since 1997. The site receives more than 10,000 hits per week. To tap this resource, go to <a href="https://www.evalutech.sreb.org">www.evalutech.sreb.org</a> on the Web.

#### Page 14:

- Department launches institutes on continuous progress in primary
- Standards toolkit now online
- Lane Report publishes special edition for students

## Department launches institutes on continuous progress in primary

The Department of Education invites Kentucky's school educators and leaders, especially school-level teams, to regional one-day institutes on continuous progress.

The institutes will provide an overview of Kentucky's primary program, share strategies for implementing the program effectively, show how to ensure continuous progress, and establish support networks of primary teachers throughout the regions and the state.

Featured speakers will be Karen Szymusiak and Franki Sibberson, authors of "Beyond Leveled Books." The department will videotape their session at the first regional institute for presentation in the other seven regions. Participants at all eight institutes will receive a copy of the book.

The per-person registration fee of \$25 covers materials, continental breakfast and lunch. Space is limited, and preference will be given to participants who attend in their own regions. To request a registration form and specific location information, contact the primary consultant hosting the regional meeting you plan to attend.

Region 1: Nov. 10 in Murray; Janice Rose, (270) 762-3217

Region 2: Nov. 3 in Bowling Green; Nancy Schulten, (270) 746-7063

Region 3: Nov. 3 in Louisville; Lori Holland, (502) 485-3951

Region 4: Nov. 10 in Highland Heights; Ruthie Stalie, (859) 292-6778

Region 5: Oct. 27 in Lexington; Rina Gratz, (859) 361-8530

Region 6: Dec. 1 in Corbin; Kay Dixon, (606) 862-0282

Region 7: Nov. 10 in Russell; Mary Campbell, (606) 783-5372

Region 8: Dec. 1 in Hazard; Lora Cheek, (606) 886-0205

All of the contacts have KETS global e-mail addresses. Information is also available from Audrey Proctor at (502) 564-3064.

### Standards toolkit now online

A toolkit full of resources related to Kentucky's new student performance standards is now available on the Web.

The new, teacher-developed standards define what student performance looks like at the "novice," "apprentice," "proficient" and "distinguished" levels. They clarify how student work is evaluated, and they help students understand what is expected of them.

The kit includes these tools for understanding the standards and using them to improve instruction:

- Key points about the standards and the process used by 1,600 teachers to develop them;
- Feedback from educators, parents and others throughout the state;
- Print and PowerPoint training materials the Department of Education used to train teachers and administrators in more than 100 locations this fall;
- Links to Kentucky's "Core Content for Assessment" and other documents related to the standards;
- The standards themselves descriptions that define the four performance levels in each content area

To locate these resources, go to <a href="www.kentuckyschools.org/standards">www.kentuckyschools.org/standards</a>. All information on the site is also available on a CD-ROM the Department of Education distributed to every Kentucky public school principal in mid-October.

For more information about Kentucky's student performance standards, contact Cheryl Ungerleider at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:cungerle@kde.state.ky.us">cungerle@kde.state.ky.us</a>. For assistance in using the student standards Web page, contact Rhody Streeter at (502) 564-3421 or <a href="mailto:rstreete@kde.state.ky.us">rstreete@kde.state.ky.us</a>.

# Lane Report publishes special edition for students

The publishers of a Lexington-based business magazine, "The Lane Report," have produced a special edition to encourage Kentucky high school students to continue their education after graduation.

The 64-page, four-color magazine, "Next," includes information on the benefits of postsecondary education plus a list of colleges and universities; technical, vocational and trade schools; community colleges; and military training opportunities.

Corporate underwriters include Ashland Inc., Toyota Motor Manufacturing of North America, LGE/KU and the Kentucky Lottery.

Officials of the Kentucky Department of Education and the Council on Postsecondary Education have recommended "Next" as another tool to help high-schoolers recognize the value of college and technical training beyond high school.

The publisher plans to ship the new magazine to all Kentucky high schools during October, with a request that principals give one copy to every student. For additional information about "Next" or this project, contact Lane Communications Group at (859) 244-3522 or sales@lanereport.com.

#### Page 15 - Bulletin Board

- <u>'We the People' competition set for February</u>
- Web site encourages students to read and evaluate books
- Bayer/NSF Award competition open to students in the middle grades
- MomUSA hosts writing competition
- Teachers invited to apply for Fulbright program

#### **Bulletin Board**

By Lisa Y. Gross Kentucky Department of Education

#### 'We the People' competition set for February

The Kentucky Administrative Office of the Courts has scheduled this year's "We the People ... The Citizen and the Constitution" statewide competition for Feb. 18, 2002, at the Holiday Inn in Frankfort.

The annual competition, co-sponsored by the Kentucky Supreme Court, is for school teams that have won in congressional district-level competitions, usually held in December. The state winner will advance to the national finals in Washington, D.C.

Through the national We the People scholastic program, students learn about the history and principles of the United States Constitution and the Bill of Rights, then test their knowledge by competing in annual mock congressional hearing competitions.

For information and assistance in setting up programs and competitions, call Rachel Bingham at (800) 928-2350 or send e-mail to rachelb@mail.aoc.state.ky.us.

### Web site encourages students to read and evaluate books

An Internet site encourages students to read books and vote for their favorites. The Kentucky Bluegrass Award program lists titles in each of four grade divisions. After students read and vote, the program invites the authors and illustrators of the students' favorite books to come to Kentucky to receive awards.

Reading and voting occur during the fall and winter months, with vote tally sheets due the following April 1. Any Kentucky school or library may participate in the program, which is supported by the Kentucky Reading Association.

For more information, go to <a href="www.nku.edu/~smithjen/kba">www.nku.edu/~smithjen/kba</a> on the Internet or contact Jennifer Smith, Northern Kentucky University, W. Frank Steely Library, Highland Heights, KY 41099; (859) 572-6620; <a href="smithjen@nku.edu">smithjen@nku.edu</a>.

## Bayer/NSF Award competition open to students in the middle grades

Students in grades 6-8 may participate in the Bayer/NSF Award program, sponsored by the Bayer Corporation, the National Science Foundation and the Christopher Columbus Fellowship Foundation and endorsed by the National Middle School Association.

The program challenges students to work in teams to solve real-world problems. Two examples of projects in recent years include helping deaf athletes communicate with coaches and identifying low-cost, efficient housing for a Native American reservation.

An independent panel of scientists, community leaders and educators will judge entries at the regional and national levels. Ten teams will receive a one-week all-expenses-paid trip to Walt Disney World Resort to participate in the national championship. First-, second- and third-place teams will win \$5,000, \$3,000 and \$1,000 per student, respectively, in U.S. Savings Bonds. One team will receive the \$25,000 Columbus Foundation Community Grant to help put its idea into action.

The deadline for entries is Jan. 31, 2002. For more information, call (800) 291-6020 or visit <a href="https://www.bayernsfaward.com">www.bayernsfaward.com</a> on the Internet.

#### **MomUSA** hosts writing competition

Students ages 12-19 are invited to participate in the 2001-02 MomUSA Student Writing Contest.

MomUSA, located in Huntington, W. Va., recognizes the outstanding contributions of mothers to their children, families and communities. Each year, the organization selects 50 state MomUSA representatives - mothers who have been nominated by their children in an essay or letter. Ten nominees will advance to the national level, and one will become MomUSA 2002.

Judges will review submissions in three age-level categories. The Kentucky Mom of the Year will be recognized in Ashland on April 6. The national winner will be announced on April 21 in Tampa, Fla.

The deadline for submissions is Dec. 15.

For more information, visit www.momusa.com on the Internet or e-mail visitmom@momusa.com.

#### Teachers invited to apply for Fulbright program

K-12 teachers may apply for the Fulbright Memorial Fund (FMF) Teacher Program, a cultural exchange and professional development activity. The FMF Program will sponsor 600 American educators for fully funded, three-week study visits in Japan next spring or fall.

Sponsored by the government of Japan, the program is designed to promote understanding between the United States and Japan. Since its inception in 1997, nearly 3,000 educators have participated. The application deadline for the 2002 program is Dec. 18, 2001.

More information is available at <a href="https://www.iie.org/pgms/fmf">www.iie.org/pgms/fmf</a>.